

Troop 409 Dix Hills, NY

Cold Weather Camping Guide

1. Water is your enemy in cold weather. Getting wet when it is cold (even in the 40's) can cause hypothermia.
2. Cotton clothing is not advisable to wear in cold weather. Cotton retains water and allows high heat loss.
3. Polyester or wool (merino, etc.) should be worn during cold weather since it helps to wick water/moisture away from skin and body heat helps to flash it away.
4. Change any under clothing when it is wet especially socks, they should be changed at 4 to 6 hour intervals. Smartwool socks are recommended.
5. When sleeping you should have a fresh set of thermal underwear, smartwool socks, a wool cap and light cotton gloves on to reduce heat loss. A sleeping bag's main purpose is to reduce heat loss. A sweat suit over the thermals will give you a much better layering of clothing to reduce heat loss.
6. Stay hydrated during cold weather. Cold dry air will dehydrate you more than during the summer months in many cases.
7. Snowballs are fun to throw but when the powder gets down into your clothing and melts it will cause you to be chilled and cold. Keep the snowballs to a minimum if you want to keep heat loss to a minimum.
8. You should have 3 pairs of gloves, 2 pair for the day and one pair for sleeping.
9. Drink Hot Chocolate or broths to keep warm. Caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea and colas) can cause blood vessels to constrict leading to less heat getting to your extremities.
10. Use layering to dress, as you get either warmer or cooler you can better regulate your comfort and reduce perspiration.
11. Stay ahead of the heat loss game by dressing appropriately from the start. Getting heavily chilled will probably lead to excessive heat loss and potential hypothermia. Therefore, shorts are not allowed on cold weather campouts.
12. Only boots will be allowed on cold weather campouts. If you show up at the pick-up point wearing sneakers, sandals, etc., you will not be going with the troop and your parent will need to take you home and drive you to the campout.